

Applicants:
International Appln. No.
Page 4

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PCT/US00/01499

REMARKS

By this Preliminary Amendment, Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 24, and amended claims 2, 5, 7-9, 11-14, 16-17, and 14, and added new claim 25.

It is noted that the corresponding PCT claims 6, 10, 15, and 17-23 were allowed. Also, it is noted that claims 2-5, 7-9, and 11-14 have been made dependent on claim 25, which is, in turn, dependent on allowed claim 17. Also, claim 16 is dependent on allowed claim 17.


Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Consideration on the merits is respectfully requested and a Notice of Allowability earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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In the claims:

Claims 2, 5, 7-9, 11-14, and 16-17, have been added and new claim 25 has been added as follows:

2. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 25, wherein the spokes having a cross section chosen to provide strength to hold the inner housing in the outer housing without permitting contact between the inner and outer [housing] housings, but further being sized to minimize conductive heat loss through the spokes from the inner [housing] housings to the outer [housing] housings.
5. (Amended) The device defined in claim 3, wherein the spokes include inner and outer ends, one of the inner and outer ends including wire mesh supporting the one end on the associated one of the inner and outer [housing] housings.
7. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 25, wherein the spokes are made from an alloy steel material including nickel.
8. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 25, wherein the spokes have a cross section that is less than about 1.5 mm in its narrowest dimension.
9. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 25, wherein the spokes include inner and outer ends, one of the inner and outer ends including wire mesh supporting the one end on the associated one of the inner and outer [housing] housings.

11. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 17, wherein the support slidably engages one of the inner and outer housings.
12. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 25, wherein the spokes are flexible in a direction perpendicular to their length, such that the spokes flex to accommodate a relative increase in a length of the inner housing over the outer housing when the inner housing thermally expands significantly more than the outer housing.
13. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 25, wherein the spokes are elongated and have a length to width ratio of at least about 3 to 1.
14. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 25, wherein the spokes have a tubular cross section.
16. (Amended) The device defined in claim [1] 17, wherein the exhaust treatment device includes a catalytic material.
17. (Amended) An exhaust treatment device for vehicles comprising:
an inner housing having an inlet and an outlet defining a longitudinal direction and having a thermally-activated exhaust treatment device therein chosen to reduce emissions from the exhaust of a combustion engine as the exhaust passes from the inlet to the outlet;
an outer housing enclosing the inner housing but characteristically not contacting the inner housing, the outer housing including an inlet and an outlet that align with the inlet and outlet of the inner housing, the inner and outer housings including walls forming a sealed cavity around the inner housing, the cavity having a vacuum drawn therein; and

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Applicants:
International Appln. No.
Page 7

John P. Biel, Jr. et al.
PCT/US00/01499

a support that [support] ~~supports~~ the inner housing in the outer housing, the support including a radially-extending body and including a foot that engages at least one of the inner and outer housings, the foot including an insulative material different from the body, the insulative material being chosen to minimize conductance of heat.

25. (New) The device defined in claim 17, wherein the radially-extending body includes spokes.

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